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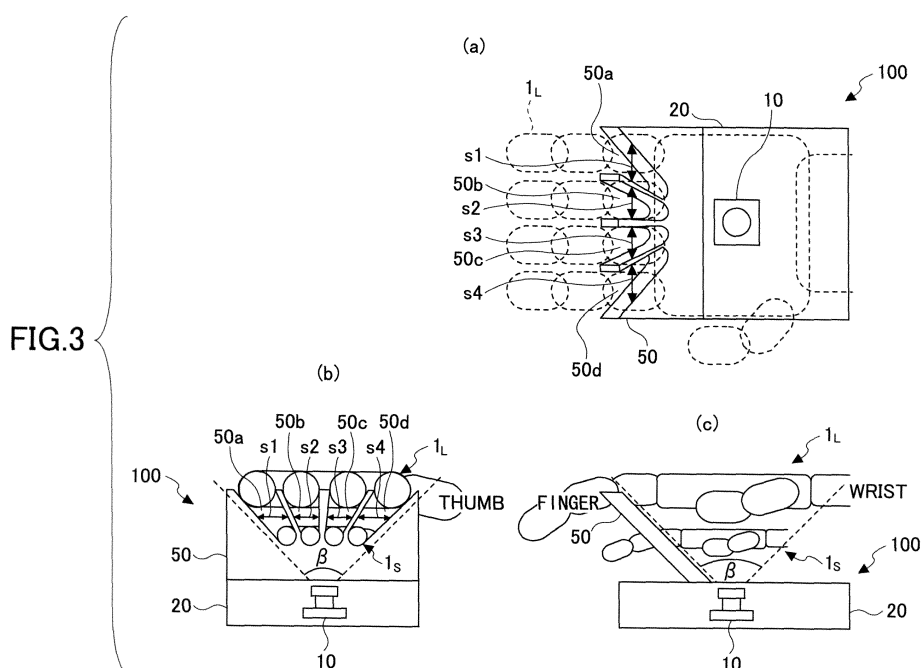
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(54) **PHOTOGRAPHIC DEVICE FOR BIOMETRICS AND BIOMETRIC APPARATUS**

(57) A disclosed capture device for biometrics authentication using an image of a person's palm includes an image sensor capturing the person's palm and acquiring an image of the person's palm and a guide member

supporting the person's palm when the person's palm is captured by the image sensor. Further, the guide member has a V-shaped-type groove in which a finger of the person's palm is to be inserted.



Description

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention relates to a capture device for biometrics authentication and a biometric authentication device, and more particularly to a capture device having a guide to be used to support a person's body part when an image of the person's body part is captured for biometrics authentication and a biometric authentication device having the capture device for biometrics authentication.

BACKGROUND ART

[0002] For example, when an image of a person's body part such as a finger(s) or a palm of the person is captured for biometrics authentication, it is desirable that the image of the finger(s) or the palm is captured in a manner such that the finger(s) or the palm is nearly matches a range of view of a camera used as an image sensor. By positioning in this way, the loss in camera resolution may be reduced and a favorable image may be captured, thereby enabling obtaining more accurate authentication result.

[0003] The above mechanism is described below with reference to FIG. 1.

[0004] As illustrated in FIG. 1(a), generally, a camera 10 used as an image sensor has the angle of view " β " constituting a capturing range "R".

[0005] As described above, as illustrated in FIG. 1(c), it is desirable that, for example, an image of a person's palm 1 is captured when the person's palm just fits the capturing range "R" of the camera 10.

[0006] On the other hand, when the person's palm 1 to be authenticated is relatively large or when a distance between the camera 10 and the person's palm 1 to be authenticated is too short, as illustrated in FIG. 1(b), the person's palm 1 to be authenticated may not be located within the capturing range "R" of the camera 10 and a part of the person's palm 1 is protruded outside the capturing range "R". In such a case, since the part of the person's palm 1 to be authenticated is protruded outside the capturing range "R", the lack of the image of the person's palm 1 part to be necessarily captured may prevent an accurate authentication result from being obtained.

[0007] In contrast, when the person's palm 1 to be authenticated is relatively small or when a distance between the camera 10 and the person's palm 1 to be authenticated is too long, as illustrated in FIG. 1(d), the entire person's palm 1 to be authenticated can be located within the capturing range "R" of the camera 10. However, as the body part of the person to be authenticated, besides the image of the person's palm 1 to be essentially captured, other body parts (e.g., fingers and a wrist) of the person and background may be included with a relatively large ratio within the capturing range "R". In such a case, the resolution of the image of the person's palm 1 to be essentially captured may be reduced; and as a result, an

accurate authentication result may not be obtained.

[0008] However, in order to properly capture the image of the person's palm 1 to be authenticated in a manner such that the person's palm 1 to be authenticated just fits the angle of view " β " of the camera 10 as illustrated in FIG. 1(c), it may be preferable to adjust the position of the person's palm 1 to be authenticated or the position of the camera 10 while monitoring an image using a monitor or the like, which is, however, inconvenient.

[0009] To overcome the inconvenience, there have been an proposal for providing a guide in advance so that a person's palm to be authenticated can be placed in its proper position (see for example, Patent Documents 1 and 3).

[0010] However, a size of a person's body part such a palm varies among different individuals. Because of this feature, when a guide manufactured for a person having a smaller palm is used for a person having a larger palm, a part of the person's palm to be authenticated may be outside the capturing range "R". On the other hand, when a guide manufactured for a person having a larger palm is used for a person having a smaller palm, the image of the person's palm to be authenticated may be captured in smaller size in the capturing range "R" or the position of the person's palm is likely to be undesirably shifted. When a part of the person's palm to be authenticated is outside the capturing range "R", as described above, necessary information may be absent. On the other hand, when the image of the person's palm is captured in smaller size, if the captured image is digitally enlarged, as described above, the resolution of the photographed image may be reduced and as a result, the authentication accuracy may be degraded.

[0011] As another prior-art technique addressing the differences among individuals, Patent Document 2 discloses a technique of adjusting a zoom of the image forming system based on a comparison result between the size of the captured image and a reference so that the person's palm can be captured in a proper size. However, the cost and the size of the optical system having such a zooming mechanism is generally more expensive and larger, respectively, than an ordinary lens system. Further, the zoom is performed using the optical axis as the center; therefore, when the capturing position is shifted from the optical axis, the subject may be outside the capturing range when the zoom is performed.

[0012] This inconvenience is described with FIG. 2.

[0013] For example, as illustrated in FIG. 2(a), in a case where relatively larger range including the image of the person's palm 1 to be authenticated is captured, when the center of the person's palm 1 is shifted from the center of the capturing range "R" at a capturing timing and the zoom is performed as described above, in the zooming result, as illustrated in FIG. 2(b), the entire person's palm 1 which should be obtained may not be obtained but only the right half of the person's palm 1 and the thumb are included within the zoomed capturing range "R". In such a case, highly-accurate authentication result may not be

obtained.

Patent Document 1: Japanese Laid-open Patent
Publication No. 2005-128936

Patent Document 2: Japanese Patent No. 3916647

Patent Document 3: Japanese Laid-open Patent
Publication No. 2006-11988

DISCLOSURE OF INVENTION

PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED BY THE INVENTION

[0014] The present invention is made in light of above circumstances, and may provide a capture device for biometrics authentication capable of capturing a good image regardless of the size of a person's body part to be authenticated when the person's body part to be authenticated is captured and a biometrics authentication device having the capture device.

MEANS FOR SOLVING THE PROBLEMS

[0015] To overcome the above inconvenience, according to an embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a guide for supporting a person's body part when the image of the person's body part is captured using an image sensor. By using the guide to capture the image of the person's body part using an image sensor, when the person's body part is supported by the guide, the distance between the person's body part and the image sensor is automatically adjusted depending on the size of the person's body part.

[0016] As an example of the configuration that the distance between the person's body part and the image sensor is automatically adjusted in accordance with the size of the person's body part when the guide supports the person's body part upon capturing the image of the person's body part, there may be one configuration in which, in a case where the person's body part is the person's palm, there is provided a guide having V-shaped grooves in which fingers of the person are to be inserted.

[0017] It is thought that the size of a person's palm is proportional to the thickness of the person's fingers. Namely, it is thought that the thickness of the finger of a person having a larger palm is accordingly thicker. On the contrary, it is also thought that the thickness of the finger of a person having a smaller palm is accordingly thinner.

[0018] By providing the V-shaped groove so that the fingers are inserted in the V-shaped grooves as described above and further providing an image sensor disposed near the bottoms of the grooves, as described below with reference to FIG. 3 or the like, when a person having a larger palm and having accordingly thick fingers inserts the fingers in the V-shaped grooves, the fingers may not be deeply inserted towards the bottoms of the grooves and remains near the edge of the grooves. As a result, the distances between the fingers and the bot-

toms of the grooves are long; therefore, the distances between the fingers and the image sensor disposed near the bottoms of the grooves are accordingly long. As a result, the person's palm to be authenticated is captured in relatively small size within the capturing range of the image sensor; therefore, it becomes possible that the person's palm to be authenticated just fits the capturing range of the image sensor. Therefore, the image of the subject to be authenticated may be fully and adequately captured; the loss in resolution may be minimized; and a highly-accurate authentication result is expected to be obtained.

[0019] On the other hand, when a person having a small palm and having accordingly thin fingers inserts the fingers in the V-shaped grooves, the fingers are deeply inserted towards the bottoms of the grooves. As a result, the distances between the fingers and the bottoms of the grooves are short; therefore, the distances between the fingers and the image sensor disposed near the bottoms of the grooves are accordingly short. As a result, the image of the person's palm to be authenticated is captured in relatively large size within the capturing range of the image sensor; therefore, it becomes possible to minimize the ratio of the unnecessary parts such as unnecessary finger (thumb), wrist, background and the like included in the capturing range of the image sensor. Therefore, the image of the subject to be authenticated may be fully and adequately captured; the loss in resolution may be minimized; and a highly-accurate authentication result is expected to be obtained.

[0020] As described above, according to an embodiment of the present invention, simply by supporting a person's body part (a palm in the above case) to be authenticated by the guide, when the person's body part to be authenticated is large, the distance between the person's body part and the image sensor is accordingly long, and on the contrary, when the person's body part to be authenticated is small, the distance between the person's body part and the image sensor is accordingly short. Because of this feature, the distance between the person's body part and the image sensor is automatically adjusted based on the size of the person's body part.

[0021] Further, in the above example, a case is described where the shape of the grooves is V-shaped. However, the shape of the grooves is not limited to the V-shaped. Similar to the V-shaped groove, any other shape of groove having a wide width between the edges of the groove and the width is decreased as approaching the bottom section may be also used. Obviously, by using the grooves having such a shape, a similar effect to that produced by using the V-shaped grooves can be obtained.

ADVANTAGEOUS EFFECT OF THE INVENTION

[0022] As described above, according to an embodiment of the present invention, it may become possible to provide a capture device for biometrics authentication

and the biometric authentication device in which the distance between the image sensor and the person's body part to be authenticated is automatically adjusted when the image of the person's body part to be authenticated is captured and therefore, the image of the subject to be authenticated can be fully and adequately captured; the loss in resolution can be minimized; and a highly-accurate authentication result is expected to be obtained.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0023]

FIG. 1 is drawings (1) illustrating a conventional drawback;
 FIG. 2 is drawings (2) illustrating a conventional drawback;
 FIG. 3(a) is a top view illustrating a configuration of a capture device for biometrics authentication according to a first embodiment of the present invention;
 FIG. 3(b) is a front view illustrating the configuration of the capture device for biometrics authentication according to the first embodiment of the present invention;
 FIG. 3(c) is a side view illustrating the configuration of the capture device for biometrics authentication according to the first embodiment of the present invention;
 FIG. 4 is a drawing (1) illustrating a method of designing a guide of the capture device for biometrics authentication of FIG. 3;
 FIG. 5 is a drawing (2) illustrating a method of designing the guide of the capture device for biometrics authentication of FIG. 3;
 FIG. 6 is a drawing (3) illustrating a method of designing the guide of the capture device for biometrics authentication of FIG. 3;
 FIG. 7 is a side view illustrating a modified capture device for biometrics authentication based on the capture device of FIG. 3 according to a modified embodiment of the present invention;
 FIG. 8(a) is a front view illustrating a configuration of a capture device for biometrics authentication according to a second embodiment of the present invention;
 FIG. 8(b) is a side view illustrating the configuration of the capture device for biometrics authentication according to the second embodiment of the present invention;
 FIG. 9(a) is a front view illustrating a configuration of a capture device for biometrics authentication according to a third embodiment of the present invention;
 FIG. 9(b) is a side view illustrating the configuration of the capture device for biometrics authentication according to the third embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 10 is drawings illustrating in more detail a method of designing the guide of the capture device for biometrics authentication of FIG. 3; and
 FIG. 11 is a block diagram illustrating a configuration of a biometrics authentication device according to a fourth embodiment of the present invention.

EXPLANATION OF REFERENCES

10 [0024]

1, 1_L, 1_S: PERSON'S HAND, PALM, FINGER(S), WRIST
 10: IMAGE SENSOR (CAMERA)
 R: CAPTURING RANGE
 β : ANGLE OF VIEW
 20: IMAGE SENSOR UNIT
 50, 50A1, 50A2, 50B1, 50B2, 51: GUIDE
 200: BIOMETRICS AUTHENTICATION UNIT

BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

[0025] A capture device for biometrics authentication according to an embodiment of the present invention is used in a biometrics authentication device capable of capturing an image of a person's body part and performing authentication based on the captured image. Further, the capture device for biometrics authentication according to an embodiment of the present invention includes an image sensor unit for capturing an image of a body part and a guide for supporting the body part, in a manner such that a size of the guide supporting the body part similarly varies in proportion to a distance from the image sensor unit.

[0026] More specifically, the capture device for biometrics authentication according to an embodiment of the present invention captures an image of a person's hand as a subject to be authenticated and includes a guide determining the distance between the person's hand and the image sensor unit in accordance with the thickness of the finger(s) of the hand and the distance between the fingers (a first embodiment described below with reference to FIG. 3 and the like).

[0027] Further, the capture device for biometrics authentication according to another embodiment of the present invention captures an image of a person's finger(s) to be authenticated and includes a guide determining the distance between the finger(s) and the image sensor unit in accordance with the thickness of the finger(s) (a second embodiment described below with reference to FIG. 8 and the like).

[0028] Further, the capture device for biometrics authentication according to still another embodiment of the present invention captures an image of a person's wrist to be authenticated and includes a guide determining the distance between the wrist and the image sensor unit depending on the thickness of the wrist (a third embodiment described below with reference to FIG. 9 and the

like).

[0029] In the following, the principles of the embodiments of the present invention are described.

[0030] The size of a person's body part greatly varies among different individuals. The shape of a person's body part, however, does not greatly vary among different individuals. For example, the size of an adult's hand may be twice as large as that of a child's hand. The shape of the adult's hand, however, is similar to that of the child's hand. Based on this feature, according to an embodiment of the present invention, by using a guide designed so that the size of the guide similarly varies in proportion to the distance from a camera used as the image sensor, there is provided a capture device for biometrics authentication that can be performed regardless of the difference in size of a person's body part such as a person's hand.

[0031] In the following, a configuration of a capture device for biometrics authentication according to the first embodiment of the present invention is described with reference to the accompanied drawings.

[0032] FIGS. 3(a) through 3(c) are drawings illustrating a configuration of a capture device for biometrics authentication 100 according to the first embodiment of the present invention.

[0033] In the first embodiment of the present invention, the capture device for biometrics authentication 100 acquires an image of a person's palm as a person's body part to be authenticated.

[0034] As illustrated in the figures, in the first embodiment of the present invention, in summary, the capture device for biometrics authentication 100 includes a guide 50 supporting a person's palm 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated and an image sensor unit 20 having an image sensor (i.e., a camera) 10 for capturing an image of the person's palm 1_L or 1_S .

[0035] The guide 50 is a substantially rectangular plate-shaped member in which guide grooves 50a, 50b, 50c, and 50d are formed, so that four fingers excluding the thumb among the fingers of a person's hand 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated are inserted in the guide grooves 50a, 50b, 50c, and 50d.

[0036] The shape of those guide grooves 50a, 50b, 50c, and 50d is V-shaped-type so that the widths s_1 through s_4 as illustrated in FIGS. 3(a) and 3(b) are gradually decreased as approaching from the edge portion to the bottom section of the guide grooves.

[0037] Herein, for explanatory purposes, the person's hand 1_L or 1_S is schematically described throughout the figures. Further, the person's hand 1_L represents the supposed maximum size of a person's hand determined in design process. On the other hand, the person's hand 1_S represents the supposed minimum size of a person's hand determined in the design process.

[0038] As described above, the guide 50 has the guide grooves 50a, 50b, 50c, and 50d, and those guide grooves 50a, 50b, 50c, and 50d are designed so that the distance between the image sensor 10 of the image sensor unit

20 and the person's hand 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated is determined in accordance with the thickness of the fingers of the person's palm. Further, the guide 50 is mounted on the image sensor unit 20 in a manner such that the guide 50 extends along a boundary line (i.e., the dashed line in, for example, FIG. 3(c)) of the angle of view " β " of the image sensor 10 of the image sensor unit 20.

[0039] Next, a method of designing the guide 50 is described.

[0040] In order to fit the person's palm to the angle of view " β " (constituting a capturing range "R") of the image sensor 10 to obtain a proper capture image, it may be preferable to adjust the distance between the person's hand to be authenticated and the image sensor 10 in accordance with the size of the person's hand.

[0041] As illustrated in FIG. 4, the widths " W_1 " and " W_2 " of the capturing range "R" constituted by the angle of view " β " of the image sensor 10 are in proportion to the distances " l_1 " and " l_2 " from the optical center "O" of the image sensor 10. Because of this feature, the position of the palm to be authenticated is adjusted so such that the distance from the optical center "O" of the image sensor 10 is increased in proportion to the size of the palm to be authenticated.

[0042] In this embodiment, the thickness of the finger (s) is used as an index of the size of the palm.

[0043] When assuming that the size of the palm is in proportion to the thickness of the finger(s), as illustrated in FIG. 5, the widths s_1 through s_4 of the guide grooves 50a, 50b, 50c, and 50d are determined in a manner such that the position of the person's palm 1_L or 1_S is determined by where the thicknesses " d_1 " and " d_2 " of the person's palm 1_L and 1_S are in proportional to the distances between the person's palm 1_L and 1_S and the optical center "O" of the image sensor 10. Further, the distances s_{11} through s_{13} between the four fingers without the thumb are in proportion to the size of the hand; therefore, the distances between the guide grooves 50a, 50b, 50c, and 50d are determined so as to be increased in proportion to the distance from the image sensor unit 20.

[0044] In the above description, a case is described where the guide grooves 50a, 50b, 50c, and 50d are provided corresponding to the respective four fingers without the thumb among the person's fingers. However, depending on a case, the guide grooves may be provided for only two fingers (e.g., the mid finger and the annular finger) from among the four fingers or only one finger (e.g., the mid finger).

[0045] Further, in the above description, as illustrated in the side view of FIG. 3(c), a case is described where the guide 50 is provided to support only a part of the entire length of the fingers. However, the present invention is not limited to this configuration. For example, the guide may have long depth (in the longitudinal direction of the fingers) so as to support the entire length of the fingers.

[0046] When the person's palm 1_L and 1_S to be au-

thenticated is lowered from the upper side so that the fingers of the person's hand 1_L and 1_S to be authenticated are inserted in the guide grooves 50a through 50d, the person's hand 1_L and 1_S to be authenticated may not be lowered any more at the position where the heights of the person's hand 1_L and 1_S correspond to the sizes of the person's hand 1_L and 1_S , respectively. More specifically, the person's hand 1_L and 1_S to be authenticated may not be lowered any more at the position where the distances between the optical center "O" of the image sensor 10 of the image sensor unit 20 and the person's hand 1_L and 1_S correspond to the sizes of the person's hand 1_L and 1_S , respectively, and then, the user stops lowering his/her hand. In this state, by capturing the image of the person's palm 1_L and 1_S using the image sensor 10 of the image sensor unit 20, the image of the person's palm 1_L and 1_S to be authenticated may be captured in a manner such that the person's palm 1_L and 1_S just fit the angle of view " β " (constituting a capturing range "R") of the image sensor 10.

[0047] Further, as apparent from FIG. 5(b), in a configuration of the guide 50 of the biometrics authentication device according to the third embodiment of the present invention, the position of the hand in a hand lateral direction (i.e., the direction from the thumb to the little finger or the direction from the little finger to the thumb) is automatically determined by where the hand in the hand lateral direction just fits the angle of view " β " of the image sensor 10. Further, as illustrated in the side view of FIG. 3(c), by disposing the guide 50 in a manner such that the guide 50 extends along the angle of view " β ", the position of the hand in a front-back direction (i.e., the direction from the fingertip to the wrist or the direction from the wrist to the fingertip) is automatically determined by where the hand in the front-back direction just fits the angle of view " β " of the image sensor 10.

[0048] On the other hand, due to individual variation, the thickness of the finger is not completely in proportion to the size of the hand (i.e., the size of the palm to be authenticated). Because of this feature, in a case where a set of the user can be limited to some extent, it is preferable that the relationship between the thickness of the finger and the size of the hand (i.e., the size of the palm to be authenticated) within the set is obtained, so that the guide 50 is designed based on the obtained relationship. By doing in this way, the guide 50 in response to the obtained relationship of the users to be authenticated may be designed more accurately. As a result, it may become possible to improve the accuracy of the distance between the image sensor 10 and the palm to be authenticated, that is the positioning accuracy of the position of the palm to be authenticated.

[0049] For example, when the relationship between the thickness of the finger and the size of the hand (i.e., the size of the palm to be authenticated) is not directly proportional as indicated in the solid straight line in the graph of FIG. 6(a) but is better fitted by a curve indicated by the dashed curve or the dash-dotted curve in the same

graph, the shape of the guide grooves 50a through 50d may be determined based on such relationships.

[0050] Regarding the relationship indicated by the dashed curve in FIG. 6(a), in the region where the fingers are relatively thin (i.e., in the left side of the figure), a rate of the change of the size of the palm is greater than that of the thickness of the fingers; and in the region where the fingers are relatively thick (i.e., in the right side of the figure), the rate of the change of the size of the palm is smaller than that of the thickness of the fingers. In this case, in response to this relationship, as indicated in the dashed curve in FIG. 6(b), in the region where the width of the guide groove is relatively narrow (i.e., in the lower side of the figure), the slope of the side wall of the guide groove is set steep in a manner such that even when the thickness of the figures to be inserted into the region slightly differs, the depth in the inserting direction, namely the position in the up-and-down direction, largely changes; on the other hand, in the region where the width of the guide groove is relatively wide (i.e., in the upper side of the figure), the slope of the side wall of the guide groove is set gentle in a manner such that even when the thickness of the figures to be inserted into the region differs, the depth in the inserting direction, namely the position in the up-and-down direction, does not significantly change.

[0051] On the contrary, regarding the relationship indicated by the dash-dotted curve in FIG. 6(a), in the region where the fingers are relatively thin (i.e., in the left side of the figure), a rate of the change of the size of the palm is smaller than that of the thickness of the fingers; and in the region where the fingers are relatively thick (i.e., in the right side of the figure), the rate of the change of the size of the palm is greater than that of the thickness of the fingers. In this case, in response to this relationship, as indicated in the dash-dotted curve in FIG. 6(b), in the region where the width of the guide groove is relatively narrow (i.e., in the lower side of the figure), the slope of the side wall of the guide groove is set gentle in a manner such that even when the thickness of the figures to be inserted into the region differs, the depth in the inserting direction, namely the position in the up-and-down direction, does not significantly change; on the other hand, in the region where the width of the guide groove is relatively wide (i.e., in the upper side of the figure), the slope of the side wall of the guide groove is set steep in a manner such that even when the thickness of the figures to be inserted into the region slightly differs, the depth in the inserting direction, namely the position in the up-and-down direction, significantly changes.

[0052] As an example of the above case where a set of the user is limited to some extent, there is a case where the exchange and increase and decrease of the users are limited and the users are families, school students, company employees or the like.

[0053] Further, in the configuration of the capture device for biometrics authentication according to the first embodiment of the present invention described with ref-

erence to FIG. 3 and the like, a guide 51 on the wrist side may further be provided on an as-needed basis as illustrated in FIG. 7. In addition, a mechanism for detecting the contact of the person's body part on the guides 50 and/or 51 may further be added. The mechanism detects a state that the insert of the fingers of the palm to the authentication is not sufficient (i.e., the fingers are still floating) and a state that the fingers are too much inserted. Based on the state detected by the mechanism, capturing the image of the palm to be authenticated by the image sensor 10 may be prevented. Therefore, by using the mechanism, there may be provided a configuration in which the image of the palm to be authenticated is captured only when the palm to be authenticated is placed on the guide 50 in a manner such that the fingers of the palm is properly inserted in the guide grooves 50a through 50d.

[0054] Further, the embodiment of the present invention is not limited to the capture device for capturing the hand (i.e., the palm) according to the above first embodiment of the present invention. The capture device of the present invention includes a capture device for capturing the image of any other body part as a person's body part, including a capture device for capturing the image of the finger(s) according to the second embodiment described below with reference to FIG. 8 and a capture device for capturing the image of the wrist according to the third embodiment described below with reference to FIG. 9. Further, the capture device of the present invention includes a capture device for capturing the image of any subject other than person's body parts but has a similar shape even though the size of the subject varies as long as the subject has a relationship like between the size of the person's fingers and the size of the person's palms.

[0055] According to the first embodiment of the present invention described above, due to the function of the guide 50 (specifically due to the function of the guide grooves 50a through 50d), the subject to be captured (person's palm 1_L and 1_S in this embodiment) is automatically guided to the appropriate position having the appropriate distance in accordance with the size of the subject. Because of this feature, it may become possible to easily and securely capture the subject in a manner such that the subject just fits the angle of view " β " of the image sensor (i.e., the camera 10). Further, regarding the image sensor (camera 10), any specific modification may not be added to a prior-art camera. Because of the features, it may become possible to make a capture device compact and inexpensive, the capture device capable of capturing under favorable capturing conditions adapted to the size of the subject to be captured.

[0056] FIG. 8 illustrates a configuration of a capture device for biometrics authentication according to the second embodiment of the present invention.

[0057] A capture device for biometrics authentication 100A according to the second embodiment of the present invention, in summary, includes guides 50A1 and 50A2 collectively supporting the person's palm 1_L or 1_S to be

authenticated and the image sensor unit 20 having the image sensor (i.e., a camera) 10 for capturing an image of the person's palm 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated.

[0058] As illustrated in FIG. 8, the guide 50A1 has a substantially triangular shape and a guide groove 50A1a in which the person's finger 1_L or 1_S is inserted. The guide 50A2 has a similar configuration to that of the guide 50A1, and has a guide groove in which the person's finger 1_L or 1_S is to be inserted. As illustrated in FIG. 8(b), those two guides 50A1 and 50A2 are mounted on the image sensor unit 20 in a manner such that those two guides 50A1 and 50A2 supports a part of the person's finger 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated (in this embodiment, joint part of the mid finger) at the both ends of the part in the longitudinal direction.

[0059] As illustrated in FIG. 8(a), the shape or the guide grooves of those guides 50A1 and 50A2 is formed in a manner such that the widths of the guide grooves are gradually decreased as approaching from the edge portion to the bottoms section of the guide grooves (i.e., V-shaped-type).

[0060] Herein, in FIG. 8, the person's finger 1_L represents the supposed maximum size of a person's finger determined in design process of the guides 50A1 and 50A2. On the other hand, the person's finger 1_S represents the supposed minimum size of a person's finger determined in the design process of the guides 50A1 and 50A2.

[0061] As described above, the guides 50A1 and 50A2 have the V-shaped-type guides grooves and those guide grooves are designed so that the distance between the image sensor 10 of the image sensor unit 20 and the finger 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated is determined in accordance with the thickness of the person's finger to the authenticated. Further, the guides 50A1 and 50A2 are mounted on the image sensor unit 20 in a manner such that the guides 50A1 and 50A2 extend along boundary lines (i.e., the dashed line in, for example, FIG. 8(b)) of the angle of view " β " of the image sensor 10 of the image unit 20.

[0062] In the capture device for biometrics authentication 100A according to the second embodiment of the present invention, similar to the capture device for biometrics authentication 100 according to the first embodiment of the present invention, especially due to the configuration of the (V-shaped-type) guide grooves of the guides 50A1 and 50A2, the subject to be captured (person's finger 1_L or 1_S in this embodiment) is automatically guided to the appropriate position having the appropriate distance on the guides 50A1 and 50A2 in a manner such that the distance between the person's finger 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated and the optical center "O" of the image sensor 10 is in proportion to the thickness of the person's finger 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated (i.e., the size of the person's finger 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated). Because of this feature, it may become possible to easily and securely capture the person's finger 1_L or 1_S in a manner such that the person's finger 1_L or 1_S just fits the capturing

range "R" constituted by the angle of view " β " of the image sensor 10. Further, the lack of the necessary information may be prevented and the loss in resolution of the image may be minimized. As a result of using the image data, highly-accurate authentication result is expected to be obtained.

[0063] A method of designing the guides 50A1 and 50A2 is described below.

[0064] FIG. 9 illustrates a configuration of a capture device for biometrics authentication according to the third embodiment of the present invention.

[0065] A capture device for biometrics authentication 100B according to the third embodiment of the present invention, in summary, includes guides 50B1 and 50B2 collectively supporting the person's wrist 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated and the image sensor unit 20 having the image sensor (i.e., the camera) 10 for capturing an image of the person's wrist 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated.

[0066] As illustrated in FIG. 9, the guide 50B1 has a substantially triangular shape and a guide groove 50B1a in which the person's wrist 1_L or 1_S is to be inserted. The guide 50B2 has a similar configuration to that of the guide 50B1, and has a guide groove in which the person's wrist 1_L or 1_S is to be inserted. As illustrated in FIG. 9(b), those two guides 50B1 and 50B2 are mounted on the image sensor unit 20 in a manner such that those two guides 50B1 and 50B2 supports the person's wrist 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated at the both ends of person's wrist 1_L or 1_S in the longitudinal direction.

[0067] As illustrated in FIG. 9(a), the shape of the guide grooves of those guides 50B1 and 50B2 is formed in a manner such that the widths of the guide grooves are gradually decreased as approaching from the edge portion to the bottom section of the guide grooves (i.e., V-shaped-type).

[0068] Herein, in FIG. 9, the person's wrist 1_L represents the supposed maximum size of a person's wrist determined in design process of the guides 50B1 and 50B2. On the other hand, the person's wrist 1_S represents the supposed minimum size of a person's wrist determined in the design process of the guides 50B1 and 50B2.

[0069] As described above, the guides 50B1 and 50B2 have the V-shaped-type guide grooves and those guide grooves are designed so that the distance between the image sensor 10 of the image sensor unit 20 and the person's wrist 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated is determined in accordance with the thickness of the person's wrist to the authenticated. Further, the guides 50B1 and 50B2 are mounted on the image sensor unit 20 in a manner such that the guides 50B1 and 50B2 extend along boundary lines (i.e., the dashed line in, for example, FIG. 9(b)) of the angle of view " β " of the image sensor 10 of the image sensor unit 20.

[0070] In the capture device for biometrics authentication 100B according to the third embodiment of the present invention, similar to the capture device for biometrics authentication 100 according to the first embod-

iment of the present invention, especially due to the configuration of the (V-shaped-type) guide grooves of the guides 50B1 and 50B2, the subject to be captured (person's wrist 1_L or 1_S in this embodiment) is automatically guided to the appropriate position having the appropriate distance on the guides 50B1 and 50B2 in a manner such that the distance between the person's wrist 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated and the optical center "O" of the image sensor 10 is in proportion to the thickness of the person's wrist 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated (i.e., the size of the person's wrist 1_L or 1_S to be authenticated). Because of this feature, it may become possible to easily and securely capture the person's wrist 1_L or 1_S in a manner such that the person's wrist 1_L or 1_S just fits the capturing range "R" constituted by the angle of view " β " of the image sensor 10. Further, the lack of the necessary information may be prevented and the loss in resolution of the image may be minimized. As a result of using the image data, highly-accurate authentication result is expected to be obtained.

[0071] A method of designing the guides 50B1 and 50B2 is described below.

[0072] Next, specific methods of obtaining the shapes of the guide(s) of the capture devices for biometrics authentication according to the first, the second, and the third embodiments of the present invention are described with reference to FIG. 10.

[0073] First, with reference to FIG. 10, a specific method of obtaining the shape of the guide 50 of the capture device for biometrics authentication according to the first embodiment of the present invention is described, the capture device for biometrics authentication according to the first embodiment of the present invention having been described above with reference to FIG. 3 and the like.

(i) First, a model of palm " 1_L " is prepared that is supposed to be the maximum as the hand (i.e. the palm) to be authenticated. Then, the width "W" just fitting to the hand " 1_L " is determined (FIG. 10(a)).

(ii) A height " 1_1 " is determined that is a distance from the optical center "O" of the image sensor 10 and where the above width "W" corresponds to the width of the capturing range "R" constituted by the angle of view " β " of the camera 10 to be used (FIG. 10(b)).

(iii) Based on a proportional relationship between the thickness " d_1 " of the finger of the model of hand " 1_L " supposed to be the maximum as the hand (i.e. the palm) to be authenticated and the thickness " d_2 " of the finger of the model of hand " 1_S " supposed to be the minimum as the hand (i.e. the palm) to be authenticated, a distance " 1_2 " is obtained that is from the optical center "O" of the image sensor 10 for the above model of palm " 1_S " supposed to be the minimum as the hand (i.e. the palm). Then the shapes of the guide grooves 50a through 50d are determined in a manner such that the widths s1 through s4 of the guide grooves 50a through 50d are in proportion

to the distances at the distances "1₁" and "1₂" (FIG. 10(c)).

(iv) The center points of the fingers of the model of palm "1_L" supposed to be the maximum within the capturing range "R" in FIGS. 10(a) and 10(b) are determined. Next, lines between each of the center points and the optical center "O" of the camera 10 are obtained. Then, the shape and the position of the guide 50 is determined so that the guide grooves 50a through 50d are mounted on the image sensor unit 20 in a manner such that the center lines of the guide grooves 50a through 50d (dash-dotted lines in FIG. 10(c) and 10(d) correspond to the lines obtained in this step between respective center points and the optical center "O" of the camera 10 (FIG. 10 (d)).

(v) The guide 50 is mounted on the image sensor unit 20 and tilted at an angel of "α" so as to prevent the obtained guide 50 from being within the boundaries of the angle of view "β" of the camera 10 mounted in the image sensor unit 20 (FIG. 10(e)). Apparent from FIG. 10(e), this angle "α" is obtained from the angle of view "β" of the camera 10 using the following formula.

$$\alpha = (180^\circ - \beta) / 2$$

the shape of the guides 50A1 and 50A2 of the capture device for biometrics authentication according to the second embodiment of the present invention described with reference to FIG. 8 and the shape of guides 50B1 and 50B2 of the capture device for biometrics authentication according to the third embodiment of the present invention described with reference to FIG. 9 are also obtained in substantially the same as that described above.

[0074] More specifically, a height is obtained that is a distance from the optical center "O" of the image sensor 10 and where the finger (second embodiment) or the wrist (third embodiment) supposed to be the maximum just fits the capturing range "R" of the camera 10. Next, the shape of the guide grooves are determined in a manner such that the thickness of the finger (second embodiment) or the wrist (third embodiment) is in proportion to the distance from the optical center "O" of the image sensor 10 in the case of the finger (second embodiment) or the wrist (third embodiment) supposed to be the maximum and in the case of the finger (second embodiment) or the wrist (third embodiment) supposed to be the minimum. Further, the guides 50A1 and 50A2 or the guides 50B1 and 50B2 are mounted on the image sensor unit 20 and tilted at the angel of "α" so as to prevent the obtained guides 50A1 and 50A2 or the guides 50B1 and 50B2 from being within the boundaries of the angle of view "β" of the camera 10 mounted in the image sensor unit 20 (similar to

the case of FIG. 10(e)).

[0075] FIG. 11 is a block diagram illustrating a configuration of a biometrics authentication device according to a fourth embodiment of the present invention.

[0076] The biometrics authentication device according to the fourth embodiment of the present invention includes a capture device for biometrics authentication 100C and a body part authentication unit 200.

[0077] The capture device for biometrics authentication 100C is one of the capture devices for biometrics authentication 100, 100A, and 100B according to the first, the second, and the third embodiments of the present invention. An image of a person's body part to be authenticated is captured by using the camera 10 (e.g., a digital camera) of the capture device for biometrics authentication 100C, and the image data of the person's body part to be authenticated is transmitted to the body part authentication unit 200.

[0078] The body part authentication unit 200 extracts the characteristics of the person's body part to be authenticated by performing a predetermined image processing on the image data of the person's body part to be authenticated transmitted from the capture device for biometrics authentication 100C. Then, the body part authentication unit 200 compares the extracted characteristics of the person's body part to be authenticated with previously registered characteristics (references) of the person's body part to be authenticated and determines whether those characteristics are similar to each other within a predetermined error range. When determining that those characteristics are similar to each other within a predetermined error range, the body part authentication unit 200 authenticates that the captured the image of person's body part belongs to the corresponding user. Otherwise, the body part authentication unit 200 determines that the captured the image of person's body part does not belong to any of the users.

[0079] A known techniques in the body authentication field or the like may be used in the above predetermined image processing and the method of determining whether the captured person's body part belongs to any of the users. Therefore, detailed descriptions thereof are herein omitted.

Claims

1. A capture device for biometrics authentication using an image of a person's palm, the capture device comprising:

an image sensor configured to capture the person's palm and acquire an image of the person's palm; and

a guide member configured to support the person's palm when the person's palm is captured by the image sensor, wherein the guide member has a V-shaped-type groove

- in which a finger of the person's palm is to be inserted.
2. The capture device for biometrics authentication according to claim 1, further comprising:
 - a guide member mounted near the image sensor and configured to support a wrist of the person's palm when the image of the person's palm is captured by the image sensor.
 3. The capture device for biometrics authentication according to claim 1, wherein the V-shaped-type groove of the guide member is configured so that, when the person's palm is captured by the image sensor and while the finger of the person's palm is being inserted in the V-shaped-type groove, a distance between the person's palm and the image sensor is automatically adjusted in accordance with a size of the person's palm.
 4. The capture device for biometrics authentication according to claim 3, wherein the configuration where the distance between the person's palm and the image sensor is automatically adjusted in accordance with the size of the person's palm is achieved by a configuration that a distance between the person's palm and the image sensor is in substantially proportion to the size of the person's palm.
 5. A capture device for biometrics authentication using an image of a person's palm, the capture device comprising:
 - an image sensor configured to capture the person's palm and acquire an image of the person's palm; and
 - a guide member configured to support the person's palm when the person's palm is captured by the image sensor, wherein the guide member is configured so that, when the person's palm is captured by the image sensor and while the finger of the person's palm is being supported by the guide member, a distance between the person's palm and the image sensor is automatically adjusted in accordance with a size of the person's palm.
 6. The capture device for biometrics authentication according to claim 5, wherein the configuration that the distance between the person's palm and the image sensor is automatically adjusted in accordance with the size of the person's palm is achieved by a configuration that a distance between the person's palm and the image sensor is in substantially proportion to the size of the person's palm.
 7. A capture device for biometrics authentication using an image of a person's body part, the capture device comprising:
 - an image sensor configured to capture the person's body part and acquire an image of the person's body part; and
 - a guide member configured to support the person's body part when the person's body part is captured by the image sensor, wherein the guide member is configured so that, when the person's body part is captured by the image sensor and while the person's body part is being supported by the guide member, a distance between the person's body part and the image sensor is automatically adjusted in accordance with a size of the person's body part.
 8. The capture device for biometrics authentication according to claim 7, wherein the configuration that the distance between the person's body part and the image sensor is automatically adjusted in accordance with the size of the person's body is achieved by a configuration that a distance between the person's body part and the image sensor is in substantially proportion to the size of the person's body part.
 9. The capture device for biometrics authentication according to claim 7, wherein the person's body part is the person's finger.
 10. The capture device for biometrics authentication according to claim 7, wherein the person's body part is the person's wrist.
 11. A biometrics authentication device comprising:
 - a capture device for biometrics authentication according to any one of claims 1 through 10.

FIG.1

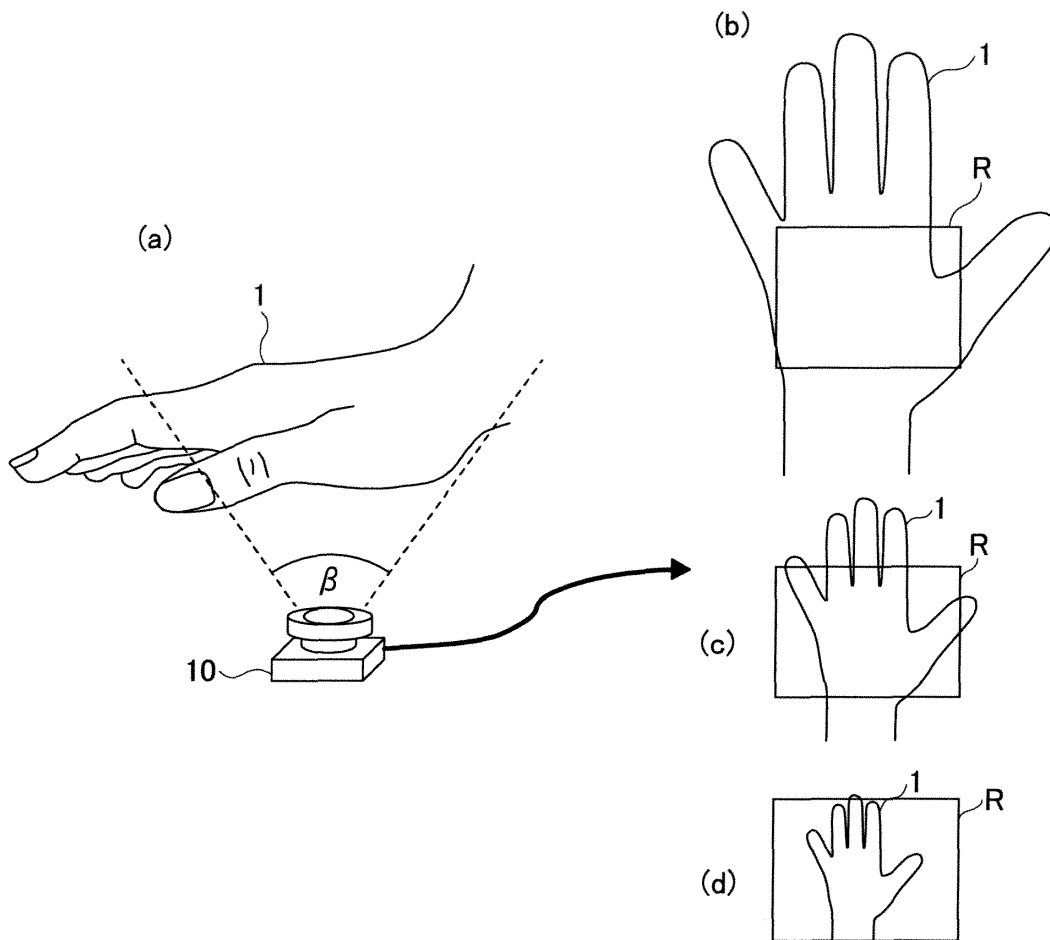
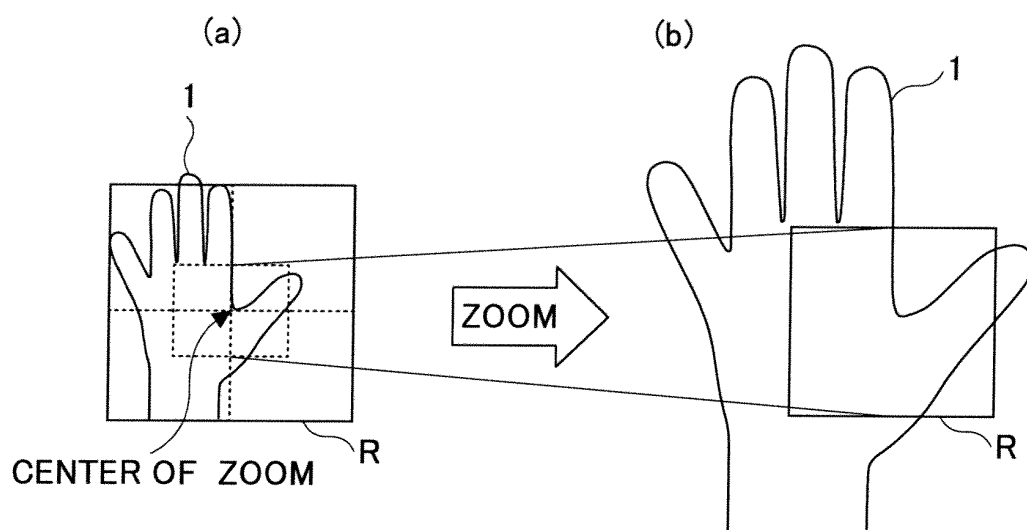


FIG.2



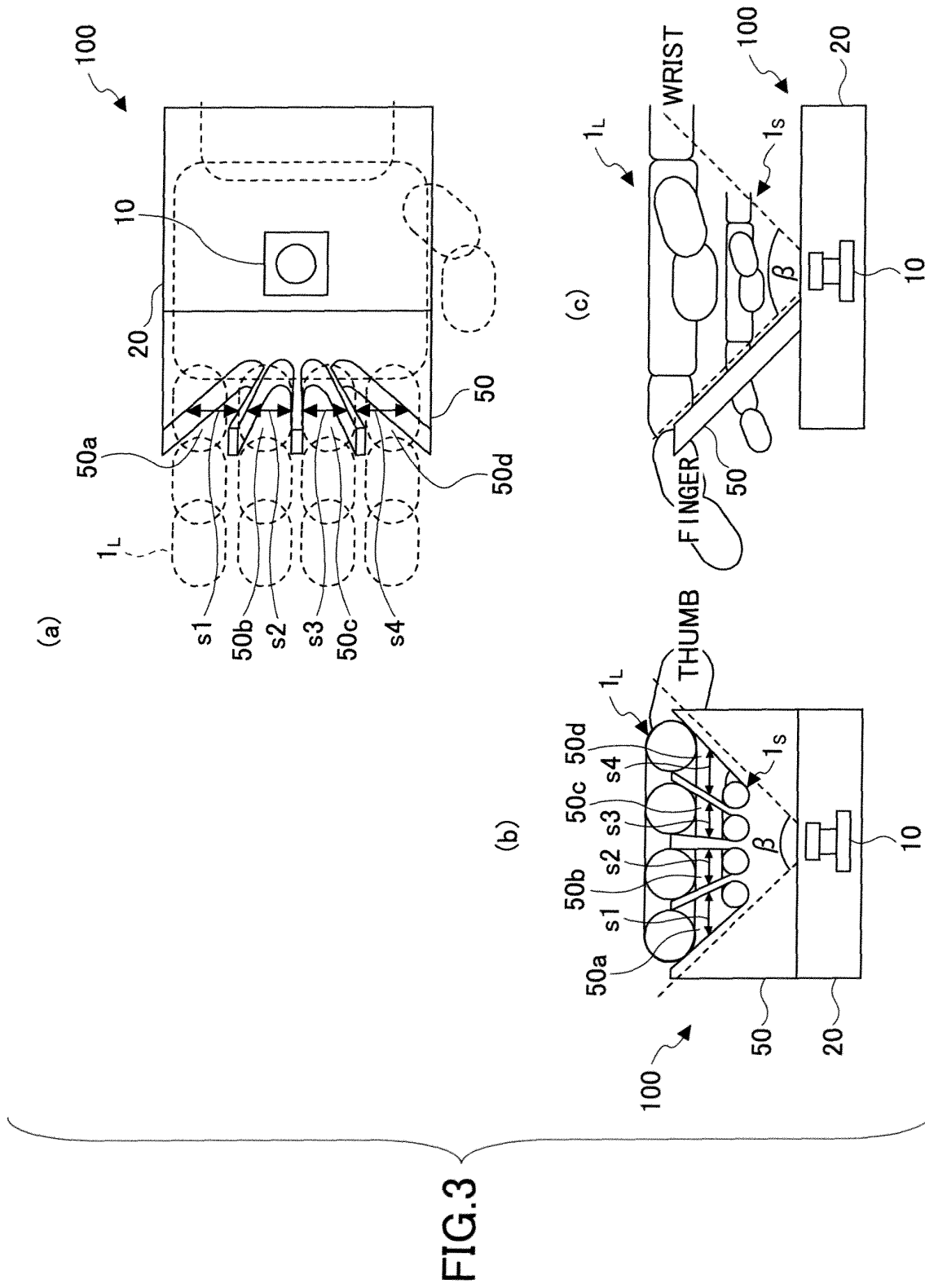


FIG.4

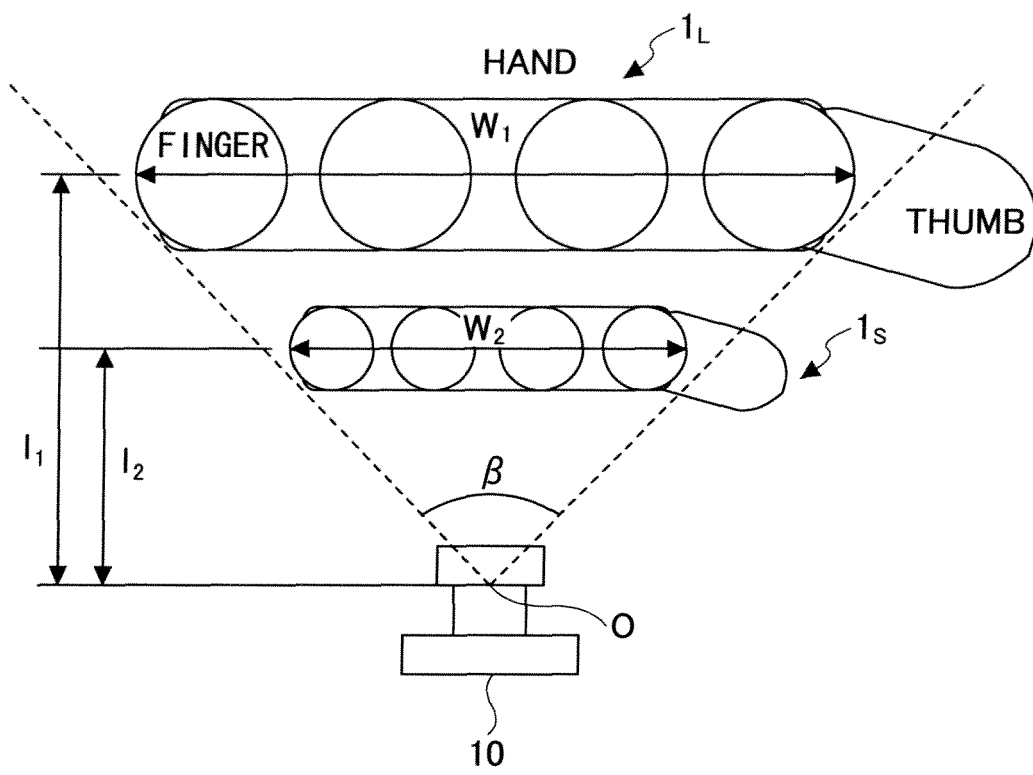


FIG.5

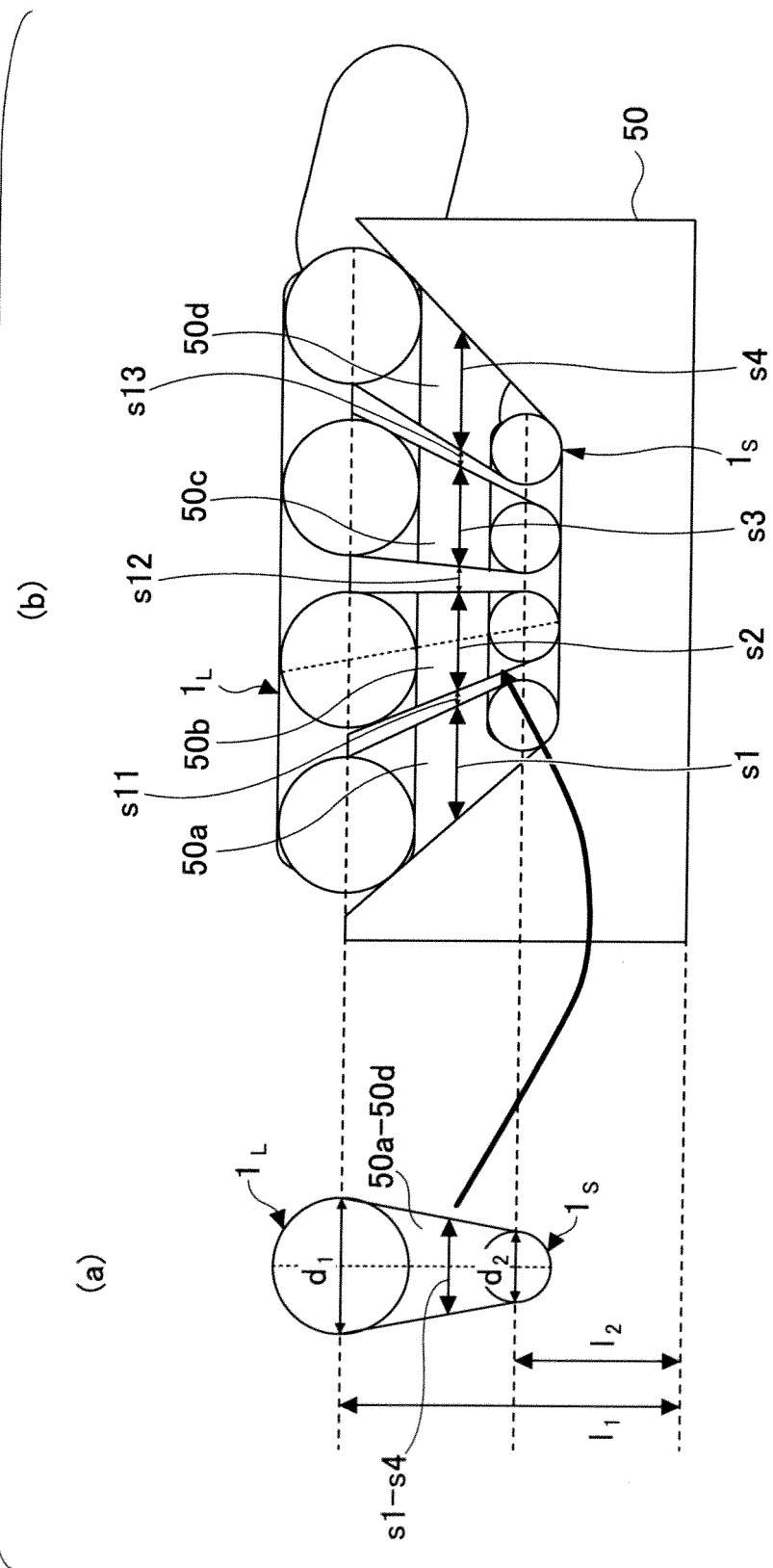


FIG.6

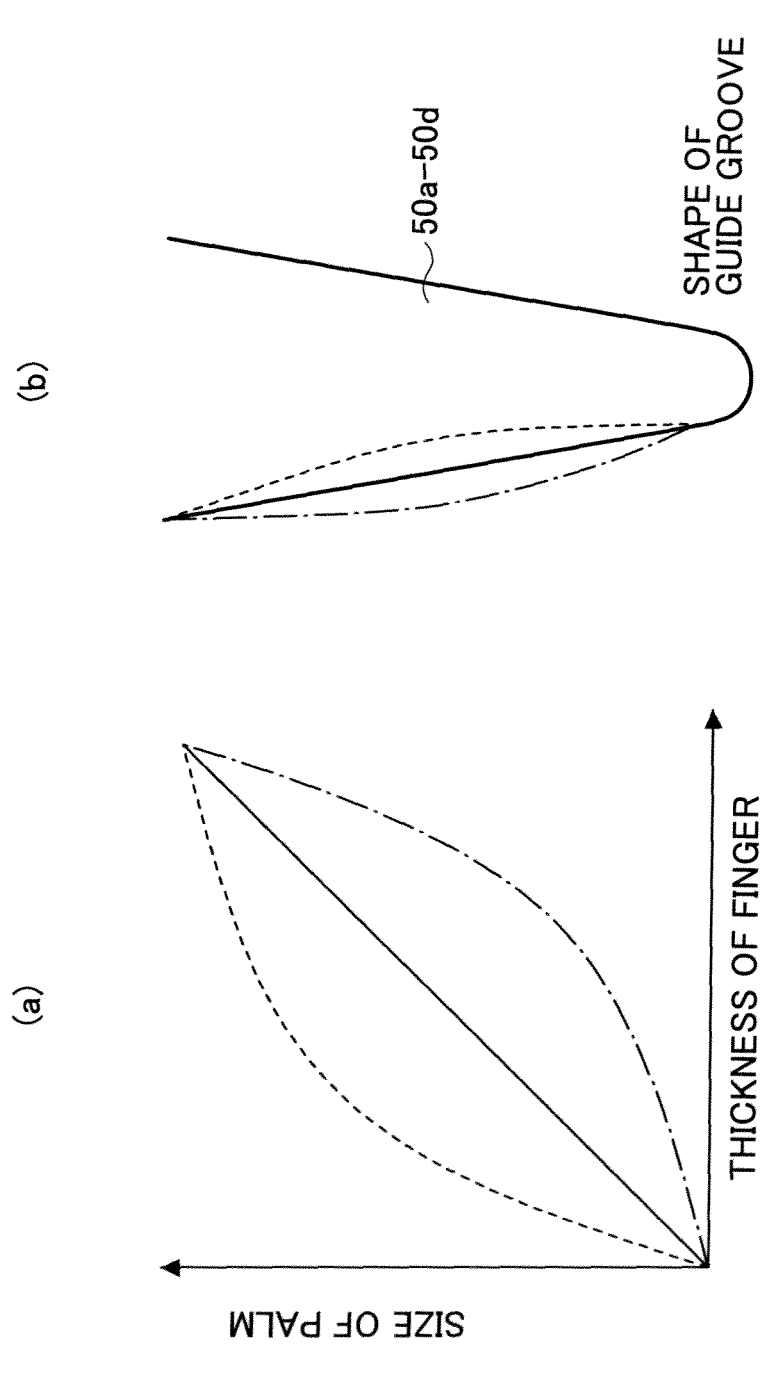


FIG.7

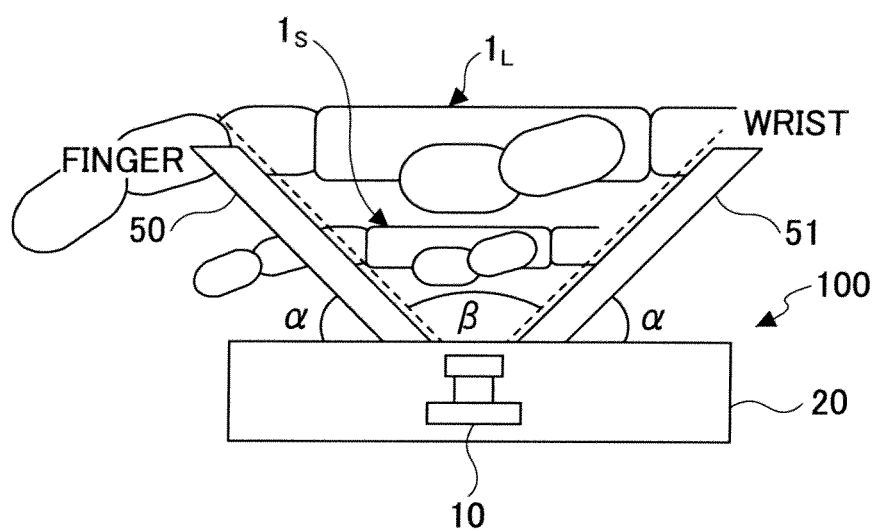


FIG.8

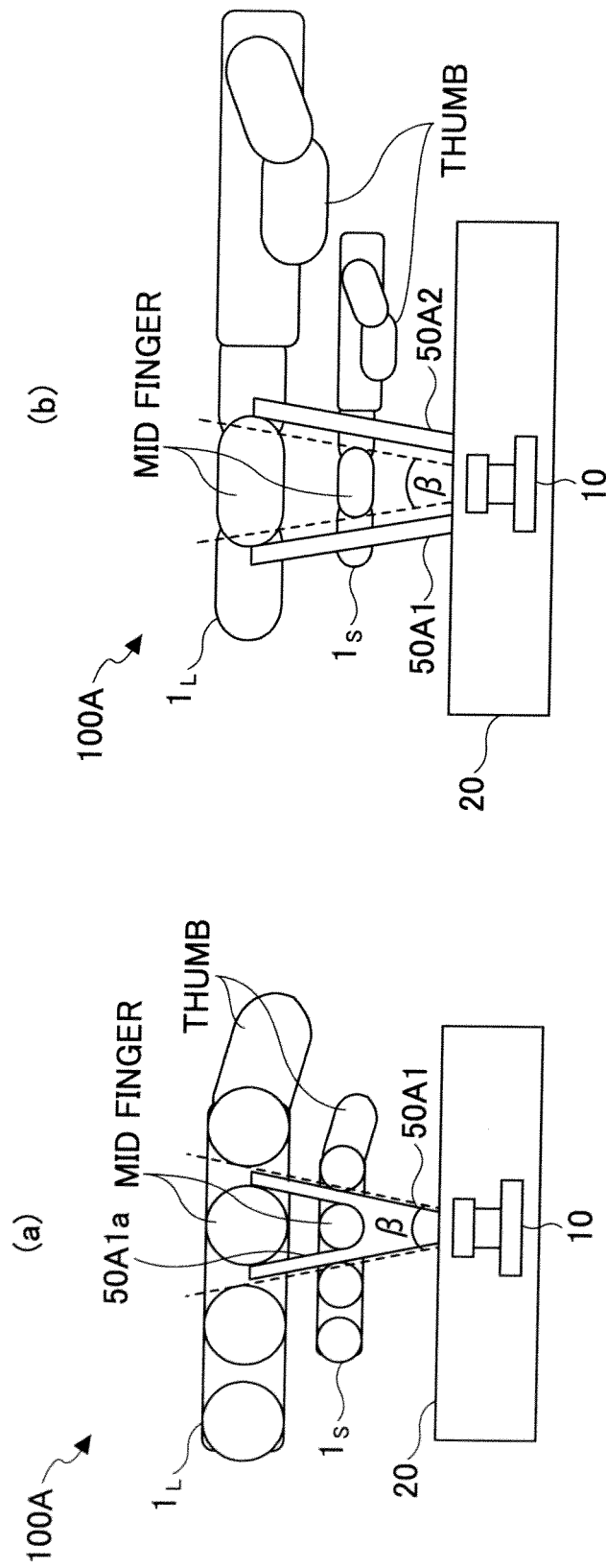


FIG. 9

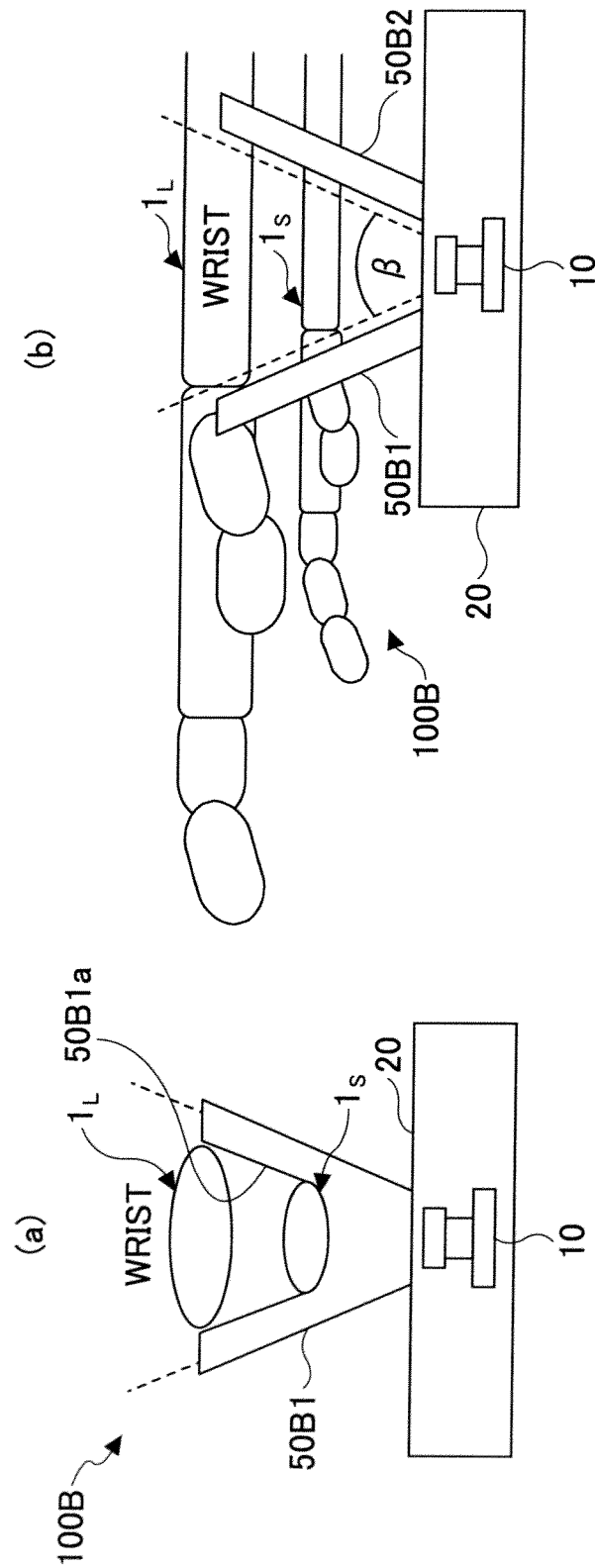


FIG.10

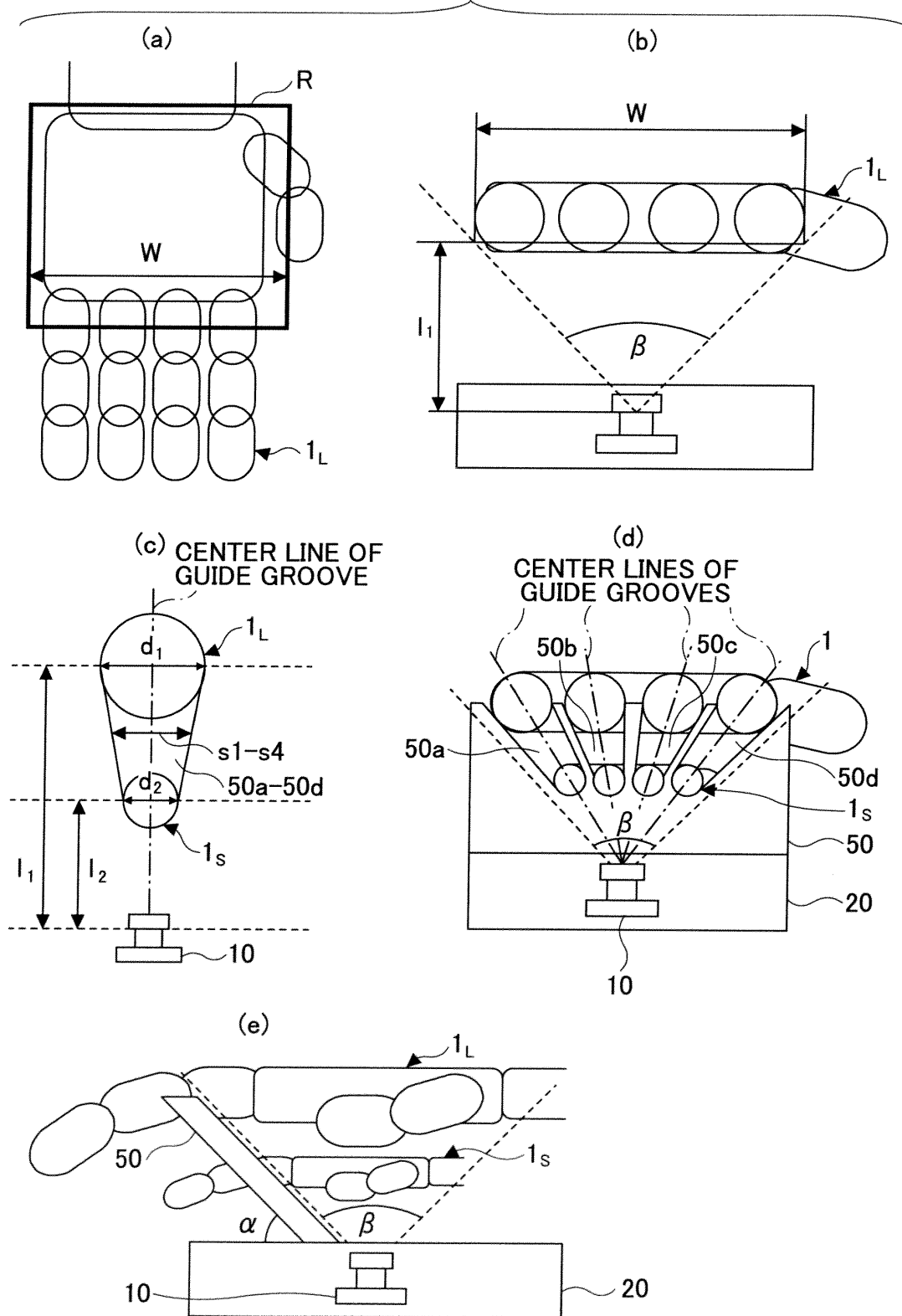
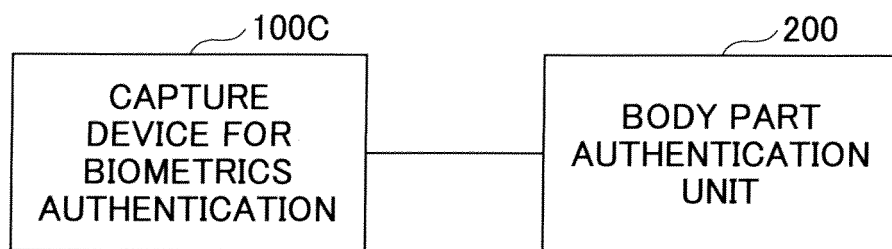


FIG.11



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/JP2008/052554

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER G06T1/00 (2006.01) i		
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED		
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) G06T1/00		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched Jitsuyo Shinan Koho 1922-1996 Jitsuyo Shinan Toroku Koho 1996-2008 Kokai Jitsuyo Shinan Koho 1971-2008 Toroku Jitsuyo Shinan Koho 1994-2008		
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	JP 2007-11769 A (Fujitsu Ltd.), 18 January, 2007 (18.01.07), Full text; all drawings & US 2007/0003112 A1 & EP 1739592 A1	1-11
Y	JP 2006-107399 A (Fujitsu Ltd.), 20 April, 2006 (20.04.06), Full text; all drawings & US 2006/0080547 A1 & EP 1612714 A2	1-11
Y	JP 2006-167333 A (ID Technica Co., Ltd.), 29 June, 2006 (29.06.06), Full text; all drawings (Family: none)	1-11
☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. ☐ See patent family annex.		
* Special categories of cited documents: "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance "E" earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed "T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art "&" document member of the same patent family		
Date of the actual completion of the international search 25 April, 2008 (25.04.08)		Date of mailing of the international search report 13 May, 2008 (13.05.08)
Name and mailing address of the ISA/ Japanese Patent Office		Authorized officer
Facsimile No.		Telephone No.

Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (April 2007)

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/JP2008/052554

C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	JP 2005-107629 A (Hitachi, Ltd.), 21 April, 2005 (21.04.05), Par. No. [0125]; Fig. 38 (Family: none)	1-11

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REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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